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"HERE LET US STOP"

by Felix Morley

Americans are supposed to be an intelligent people. At least one must assume that, or else be forced to conclude that our political institutions are absurd.

These are built around the belief that there is some virtue in democracy, meaning control by majority opinion. But if majority opinion is stupid, shortsighted, or misguided, then obviously a form of government which conforms to majority opinion is likely to exhibit disastrous faults. The present crisis strongly suggests that our present bureaucracy represents the worst, and not the best, in the American heritage.

There is abundant evidence that the United States, for all its tremendous physical power, is accomplishing nothing that can be called beneficial to mankind. We are certainly throwing our weight around. We certainly talk about "democracy" as though we really believe in it. We also talk a great deal about our "responsibilities". But our political leadership seems wholly unable to fulfill these responsibilities, or even to define intelligibly what they are.

Actually, the Administration is now concentrating on preparation for another war, in which there is much to indicate that we would be the aggressor. The waging of aggressive war is the poorest possible defense of democracy. It is, rather, a confession of mental and moral bankruptcy. And it has always been the historical prelude to the downfall of the aggressor.

The lives of our youth are not the property of the State, to throw on a rubbish heap in Korea or Yugoslavia as some brass hat may ordain. And the traditions of this Republic were not entrusted to incompetent demagogues to dissipate and squander at their sweet pleasure. Whether or not intelligent, Americans are at least a decent people. Lately they have paid a terrible bill, with nothing worthwhile to show for it. Before they lose what is left of their heritage, before they are conscripted for the war that nobody wants, an accurate accounting of governmental performance is in order.

It is not enough to wait patiently for the next election, still more than seven months away. By then, as things are going, it may be

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too late to save the Republic. Indeed, there is all too much reason to believe that the Presidential entourage is not unwilling to precipitate a war before the election, on the too clever assumption that there is now no other way in which those responsible can keep their appalling record at least partly concealed from public scrutiny.

II

Let us meet the present Administration on the same low ground which Mr. Truman chose for his "crisis" message of March 17. Let us, for the sake of his argument, forget with him the principles which really made this Republic great. Let us confine the case to the narrow issue of national "security". Let us even for the moment admit what history will deny: that American participation in the last war was inevitable.

In defense of President Truman it must be said that his predecessor set the course towards catastrophe. It was Roosevelt who filled government offices with fellow travellers; who capitulated to Stalin in secret agreements which he did not dare to reveal to the American people; who permitted the Russians to occupy half of Europe and strengthen their offensive position in the Far East.

All that is clear enough. But when set forth it still remains undeniable that Harry Truman accepted and confirmed the Roosevelt policy of strengthening Communist dictatorship. It was Truman who gave Manchuria and northern Korea to Russia, in return for five days of assistance against an already conquered foe. It was Truman who signed the Potsdam Agreement, which made the Communist hegemony in Central Europe certain. It was Truman who led the Republic blindfold into the snare and delusion of the United Nations. It was Truman who, for political purposes, surrendered to Zionist pressure and thereby assured the humiliating tragedy of Palestine. It is Truman who is now playing Pendergast politics by trying to reverse the hopeless blunders which he approved at Trieste.

Finally it was Truman who personally indorsed the two cold-blooded atrocities by which America destroyed all of its moral supremacy in the last war -- the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, after Japan was licked; and the Nuremberg trials, a travesty of justice accomplished in concert with a government which the President himself now indicts as a menace to American institutions.

In face of this record no honorable man can uncritically accept the statement of Mr. Truman that: "The achievement of lasting peace, based on freedom and justice, has been the great goal of this nation." It has been the goal of the nation, but certainly not the goal of those who for too long have been allowed to lead it progressively towards irredeemable confusion and disaster.

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Separate consideration should be given to the fate of the United Nations, already -- as a factor for the preservation of world peace -- as dead as frozen mutton.

The infinitely superior League of Nations lasted nearly twenty years, without American membership, and accomplished much valuable work. The United Nations, primarily New Deal in design and sponsorship, is fading out of the picture well in advance of its third birthday. Politically speaking, it has served only to stimulate strife and to assist the subtle Russian program of world domination.

The only real issue about UN, now, is that which has so often exercised the ingenuity of those who write murder mysteries -- how to dispose of the remains in such a manner that responsibility for the crime may be concealed. And if all this were no more than a "whodunit" there might be something soothing in all the ingenious endeavor to divert suspicion from the White House. We could accept as a game the present feverish effort to focus responsibility on those who only eighteen months ago agreed with us at Nuremberg that:

> "to prepare, incite or wage a war of aggression, or to conspire with others to do so, is a crime . . . and that for the commission of such crimes individuals are responsible."

But it will not need another Nuremberg trial -- next time in Moscow, or Washington -- to make clear where the responsibility for the demise of the United Nations rests. It rests with those who, defying everything in the American tradition, attempted to base world peace on a concept of power politics. As HUMAN EVENTS has often pointed out, the United Nations was in theory nothing more than an alliance of Great Powers, set up to dominate the world. When the two most powerful Allies fell out, the "peace-loving" organization inevitably collapsed.

One is forced to wonder whether Americans are any longer capable of appreciating the profound wisdom of Washington's Farewell Address, and its admonition that:

> "The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our foreign relations to have with them as little <u>political</u> connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled, with perfect good faith. Here let us stop."

If anything is clear, amid the chaos produced by our contradictory and capricious foreign policy, it is that the so-called isolationists were essentially <u>right</u>. They knew that America can run its own affairs reasonably well. They knew that in pontifically declaiming on the world stage we would be likely to prove ourselves blundering fools.

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Our whole system of government, the whole idea of a Federal Republic, is based on foregoing the path of empire, on developing those private ventures in which American genius is brilliant, in shunning those grandiose schemes of power politics -- mislabelled "internationalism" -- which can only bring misery at home and abroad. It is not unnatural for a ward politician to be President of the United States. But it becomes grotesque when a man of parochial outlook, inferior training and deficient ability attempts to rush a reluctant people down the dangenerous road of imperial rule.

"The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on." It is a bitter pill for Americans to realize that this country, during the past few years, has led the world in smashing the fabric of civilization; has accomplished virtually nothing outside its borders towards the rebuilding of something better. It is not merely German factories that we have dismantled. It is the whole structure of American ideals.

The mistakes which we have made cannot be cancelled out. But it is not necessary to pile new blunders on those which now serve to plague us. There is no reason to be hysterical because we did not foresee what we helped to precipitate in Czechoslovakia. The way to keep the disease of Communism from conquest is to fight it in the realm of mind and spirit, saving conscripted bodies as a last and forlorn hope.

The union of Western Europe is all to the good. The world would have been happier if the Europeans had developed it long ago. But let us not delude them into thinking that American opinion wants to see this Republic a party to a military alliance directed against those with whom we were so recently, and disastrously, allied.

In less than a year the so-called Marshall plan has been completely altered from its original design. It is no longer a European Recovery Program. Now it is a program for subsidizing and even arming Western Europe as a fringe of imperial outposts. Only the most fatuous diplomacy could have produced so dubious and desperate an outcome.

Before our failure can be redeemed, its appalling magnitude must be understood. We have only ourselves to blame. And we must realize that emphasis on physical power is now more likely to hasten than to avert the final war towards which we are plunging headlong. To avoid this end we must restore the ideals on which our power rests.

"So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled, with perfect good faith. Here let us stop."

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. V, NO. 12

By Frank C. Hanighen March 24, 1948

There is a concept of national defense which stands in sharp conflict with the official position of the Truman Administration, as expressed in the President's demand for Universal Military Training. Among military men, the concept is increasingly associated with the name of General Douglas MacArthur, although it was by no means originated by him. Any military ideas, however, which are favored by our foremost military strategist command attention. Therefore, from friends in his profession we have obtained the following picture of the General's views on this decisive issue.

MacArthur does not believe in the inevitability of war, but he does fear that our prevailing defense policy -- which he considers obsolete and dangerous -- will lead to war. He thinks that war can be avoided, that aggressive nations would not dare challenge our power, if U. S. defense were built on a sound basis. By "sound", the General means its construction according to the following design.

Air power must constitute the central factor in our over-all system of defense. Ground forces and the Navy, as essential as ever, should be organized and maintained as supporting arms to air power. Ground forces should be utilized principally to secure and protect air bases and overland lines of communications. The fleet should be used principally to supply these bases, keep the sea lanes open and to deny their use to an enemy. In short, we must place our main reliance on air power, not on a mass army.

Soviet Russia has no fear of a U. S. mass army; the Russians with their enormous man power can play that game on a grander scale than we could ever afford. MacArthur believes that mass armies as we have known them in the past are unnecessary in the future. He is unalterably opposed to the pet idea of the President and the General Staff -- the UMT plan for a mass conscript army. In the General's view, such a plan would prove a waste of national resources; we can no longer afford the luxury of UMT. What the Red Army leaders fear most of all is a streamlined system of U. S. defense based on air power.

Personal experience has influenced MacArthur in the formation of his military philosophy. In World War I, in a matter of minutes, he saw 3,000 American boys slaughtered uselessly in one action, an example of old style warfare. He resolved then never to permit such a sacrifice under his command. In his World War II career, MacArthur kept this vow. In his whole campaign from Australia to the Philippines, he suffered fewer casualties than did Eisenhower in the dubious Anzio Beach operation.

MacArthur's views on the President's proposal for re-enactment of Selective Service are not known at present. But those who are familiar with his thinking say that he would not favor it unless all other methods were exhausted. And these methods, they say, have not been exhausted. What the President demanded last week was, in effect, the use of Selective Service to obtain 120,000 soldiers for the Army. The Army, it is claimed, would have obtained this number if it had not raised the physical and mental standards for recruits. As a result, enlistment centers have been rejecting 45 per cent of all applicants. Reduction of these requirements to those set during the recent war is strongly urged. The formidable task of putting the Selective Service machine into operation is not justified by a shortage of only 120,000 soldiers.

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The secret history of the President's address to Congress on March 17 throws light on both the foreign and political situation. It is reliably reported that the original speech was more forceful and documented than the one delivered; that shortly before the President faced Congress, the speech was considerably revised and

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"softened". Three portions are said to have been removed from the final draft: (1) a statement that over 60 per cent of ERP will go to Britain; (2) a picture of Russian military strength; (3) an argument for the construction of six 80,000 ton aircraft carriers, to cost approximately $250,000,000 each.

Observers differ as to the motives for the alteration of the speech. Some claim that foreign policy considerations modified it. According to this view, the State Department finally decided against what they deemed too forceful an utterance, and, instead, for a collection of points nicely calculated to impress both Russia and Western European nations. The people in the latter nations take a peacetime draft as a sign of earnestness for a strong hand. In a somewhat similar situation in the spring of 1939, Britain's "token draft" was more political than military; then the British Government was seeking to allay the qualms of the French people about how much backing they would get from Britain in the "stop Germany" policy.

Another view about the revision of the speech is based on domestic political considerations. Truman invited Congressional leaders, Democratic and Republican, to come to the White House one hour before delivery of the speech. These leaders were not disposed to lend their prestige to a speech which they had not had time to study. Also, they resented the failure of the White House to take them into confidence and to consult them regularly as policies were being shaped. In the case of the Democratic leaders in Congress, some of the heat generated by the present North-South split in the Party may well have been a factor. Because these Congressional leaders declined the invitation, Mr. Truman and his advisers decided on the hasty revision of the speech.

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The President's address to Congress at first was hailed as improving his chances for re-election, but this view is rapidly being abandoned. Within a few days following the address, Senators Sparkman (Ala.) and Umstead (N.C.) came out against Truman's nomination. Then, cruelest blow of all, Senator Lister Hill (Ala.), hitherto a Truman stalwart, followed suit. At the same time, Democratic machine leaders in New York publicly opposed the President's renomination.

It is true that the President's ovation in New York City on St. Patrick's Day brought some happiness to his supporters in the North. It has been the belief of some political observers that the President lost the "Catholic vote" in the 1946 election, and his foreign policy ever since has been in part designed to win it back. But even if that be true, the contradictory implications of his foreign policy are not encouraging. Thus, the Catholic support attracted on St. Patrick's Day was offset on March 19 by the Jewish hostility arising from the reversal of the partition policy on that date. Likewise, observers were quick to say, after the Trieste announcement, that while Italian votes were won, South Slav votes were lost.

It was significant that the predominant note in editorial comment on the reversal of the partition policy was one of criticism of Truman's bungling of the Palestine policy. Few paid tribute to the President's courage in correcting a mistake. On the other hand, there was much acclaim when Truman slammed the door on Left Wing support -- "I don't want Wallace votes". But this editorial praise is not echoed in party clubhouses. Politicos say that such a statement violates the political precept of welcoming any and all supporters; it's not good politics.

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As the question of whether or not Truman can be renominated comes to the fore, there is increasing talk by Democrats in favor of drafting Eisenhower. This column has received details about one attempt to explore the General's political views and

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his attitude towards a "convention draft". According to this information, a conservative Democrat approached Eisenhower and returned with the distinct impression that the General would accept the nomination if drafted. Also, he found that the General opposes the President's civil rights proposal and the FEPC, and urges reduction of Government expenditures. It is noticeable that the General's ideas on these specific questions would be warmly welcomed by the Southern wing of the Democratic Party.

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The National Security Council of the Government is considered to be an increasingly powerful body in the determination of both foreign policy and military matters. It is composed of the President, the Secretaries of State, Defense, Army, Navy and Air Force and the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board. The Council is regarded by some observers as wielding more power, at least on certain matters of foreign policy, than the State Department.

The following story, current in State Department circles, illustrates the strong influence of the NSC. The body, at a meeting in December, 1947, was presented with a study made by the Central Intelligence Agency on Palestine partition. To the consternation of the members, the study attacked partition as unworkable and dangerous. The members asked why they had not been given this report before the United States Delegation at Lake Success backed partition and secured its passage in the Assembly. From then on, so goes the story, the NSC worked for and finally brought about the reversal of the partition policy, which took place last week in UN.

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Briefs ---- The President probably spoke from ignorance on March 11, when he denied that, in our policy in China, we had ever favored the inclusion of Communists in a Chinese coalition government. But observers do not take such a charitable view of statements from the State Department on this subject. The State Department sought to defend the Marshall policy in China by saying that the "participation" of Communists, which Marshall had urged, meant only participation in Parliament, not the Government. State Department spokesmen, it is said, knew full well that their denial was false; the "red cell" in the Far Eastern Division was merely trying to escape from the odium of its traditional pro-Communist policy.

---- The Peron policy of "America for the Americas" is a source of much embarrassment to the State Department. The Argentine President helped win recent elections for his party by demanding return of the Falkland Islands from Britain. Peron now proposes to prohibit all non-American Powers from holding any territory in the Americas; and he is obtaining much support from other Latin-American nations. He is expected to push this proposal at the coming Pan-American Congress in Bogota. Since U. S. world policy is enmeshed with the interests of Britain, the Netherlands and France (all possessing colonies in the Western Hemisphere), the State Department does not take kindly to the Peron crusade.

---- In the corridors at Lake Success, there is one original suggestion for solving the Palestine problem which may win some attention ere long. It is proposed to give a joint trusteeship for the Holy Land to Turkey and Britain: Turkey to govern and maintain order internally; Britain to patrol the sea-coast and prevent illegal immigration. In behalf of the idea, it is argued that Turkey, a Moslem, but non-Arab, State, with interests in that area, would prove acceptable to the Arabs. The Arabs, however, have some provisos. They are insisting that any trusteeships be only temporary; and that any Jewish immigration be limited to not more than 150,000.

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Book Events

The Rise and Fall of Third Parties, by William B. Hesseltine. Washington, D. C. Public Affairs Press, $2.50. (Paper, $1.50.) Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Professor Hesseltine's little study falls about half way between a work of scholarship and a political tract. The Professor's prose is rather aggressively colloquial, often overburdened with cliches and sometimes emotional, as when for example he deals with Theodore Roosevelt's usurpation of the leadership of the third party movement of 1912 and his subsequent betrayal of it. Nevertheless, whenever Mr. Hesseltine is content to speak purely as an historian, he is illuminating.

The rise and rapid decline of third party movements in the United States, he tells us, is to be explained by the peculiarities of the American political system. All American parties which have been successful and have been more or less permanently established had their origin as second parties; yet no major party has ever represented any definite political or economic interest. It is here of course that the American system offers its greatest contrast to democracies of the Continental European model, and especially to those in which the parliaments are elected by some method of proportional representation. The difference, says Mr. Hesseltine, is that all the compromises and accommodations which attend the organization of a European government after an election are here undertaken before the election. Where a European prime minister must choose his cabinet from various parties, the American President must choose one from the disparate factions within his own party and prepare his legislative programs and distribute his patronage according to the relative power of these factions. This, it seems, is why opposing parties tend to be so nearly alike in their policies and conduct, and why they tend inevitably toward conservatism.

Historically, Professor Hesseltine distinguishes four abiding traditions in American politics, two conservative and two radical. He identifies them as the Hamiltonian interest, meaning that of the great bankers and industrialists; the Bourbon interest, meaning the larger landowners; the Agrarian interest, meaning the smaller farmers and the rural population generally; and the "Liberal-Labor" interest, meaning the urban working classes. Whichever party manages to align three of these elements against the fourth becomes the dominant party for as long as the alliance endures. Thus the Jacksonian party of 1828, like the New Deal of 1932-40, was the alliance of Agrarians, Bourbons and Labor against the Hamiltonians; the Republican Party of 1860 was an alliance of Hamiltonians, Western Agrarians and northern Labor against the southern Bourbons. Third parties arise as protests against these anomalous alliances; and although they are doomed from their inception, they have nevertheless a useful function as vehicles of political and social dissatisfactions, which are thereby forced on the attention of the major parties.

The Liberal Party, which began as a protest against the institution of slavery, soon attracted the support of capitalists interested in the industrial exploitation of the western states. It became the Free Soil Party and its policy was modified to mere opposition to the extension of the slavery; along with the northern wing of the Know-Nothings and the dissident Whigs and Democrats it was quickly absorbed into the new Republican Party. The Populist movement of the 1880s was of course the revolt of western and southern Agrarians against the eastern capitalists; they were presently reinforced by intellectuals, political and monetary reformers and the more militant wing of the Labor movement, and these provided a base for the great Progressive movement of 1912.

Mr. Henry Wallace's third party promises to be much shorter lived than any of these, representing, as it does, nothing more than a temporary haven for heterogeneous malcontents, rash or naive enough to stomach an association with Communists.

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